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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE GROUP
INTELLIGENCE REPORT

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COUNTRY French Indo China - France - Siam

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SUBJECT The Indo Chinese Situation

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SUPPLEMENT

1. Prince Putsarath, Prince Souvana Phouma and M. Daridan (French Charge d'Affaires in Bangkok) met for over an hour on 10 February. Putsarath was very firm and there was no doubt of his intentions - which are completely nationalistic. He cannot be bought; he wants the complete independence of Laos which he is completely capable of governing. It was the first time that a French official met with and accepted people with whom he can deal and who are well fitted to manage the affairs of their country.

25X1A6a

2. The Princes were a little disappointed because although Daridan was personally sympathetic, he was unable to negotiate immediately and had to send word to Saigon. The meeting was definitely constructive, but the Princes are impatient.

3. It is important for Tao Oon (leader of the Peoples' Party of Laos) and the Princes to get along and work together.

25X1A6a

4. As far as the Vietnam situation is concerned, it is possible that the French want to restore the former Emperor of Annam, Bao Dai, and unify Annam under his rule, leaving the rest of the north to the "Communist-Viets". The French will concentrate their efforts on Cochin China and Cambodia with a Cochin Chinese "Republic" and an "Independent" Cambodia in the present sense, with some possible modifications. They will probably grant independence to Laos which has no economic, strategic or even cultural value to them.
5. The French need a good neighbor for their Cochin Chinese and Cambodian interests. They have to give back part of the provinces to Siam, but they want to keep Rattambang because it is the "rice granary" of Cambodia. Since they have no interest in Laos, they will say to Siam: "We want to keep the Cambodian part, but we'll let you have a free hand with Laos." The French know that Siam's interests are tied up with those of Laos.

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